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A SHORT TALE OF A KING'S
LESSON.

IT IS TOLD OF
Matthias Corvi-
nus, king of Hun-
gary, the Alfred
the Great of his
time and people,
that he once heard
(once only?) that
some (only some,
my lad?) of his
peasants were over worked and under-fed.
So he sent for his Council, and bade come
thereto also some of the mayors of the good
towns, and some of the lords of land and
their bailiffs, and asked them of the truth
thereof; & in diverse ways they all told one
and the same tale, how the peasant carles
were stout and well able to work, and had
enough and to spare of meat & drink, see-
ing that they were but churls; and how if
they worked not, at the least, as hard as they
did, it would be ill for them and ill for their
lords; for that the more the churl hath, the
more he asketh; and that when he knoweth
wealth, he knoweth the lack of it also, as it
fared with our first parents in the Garden

This is the Golden type.



WILLIAM MORRIS AS A PRINTER: THE KELMSCOTT PRESS

HAVING had occasion of late to inquire into several widely differing branches of decorative art, it seemed to me that wherever I turned I found William Morris. In each case he was generally acknowledged by those whose opinions were most worth hearing as producing the best examples of that art to be had. His achievements in tapestry weaving, almost lost as an art in spite of the steady production of it by the looms under the patronage of the government of France, are well known and have been recently emphasized by the placing of a magnificent piece at Oxford. His fabrics, furniture, wall papers, and his carpets, as beautiful and durable as Oriental rugs, are all familiar by name, at least, to art lovers and those interested in beautiful living, but it is the purpose of these illustrations to call attention to his work as a designer of types and producer of books, which is the latest expression of his genius for decoration.

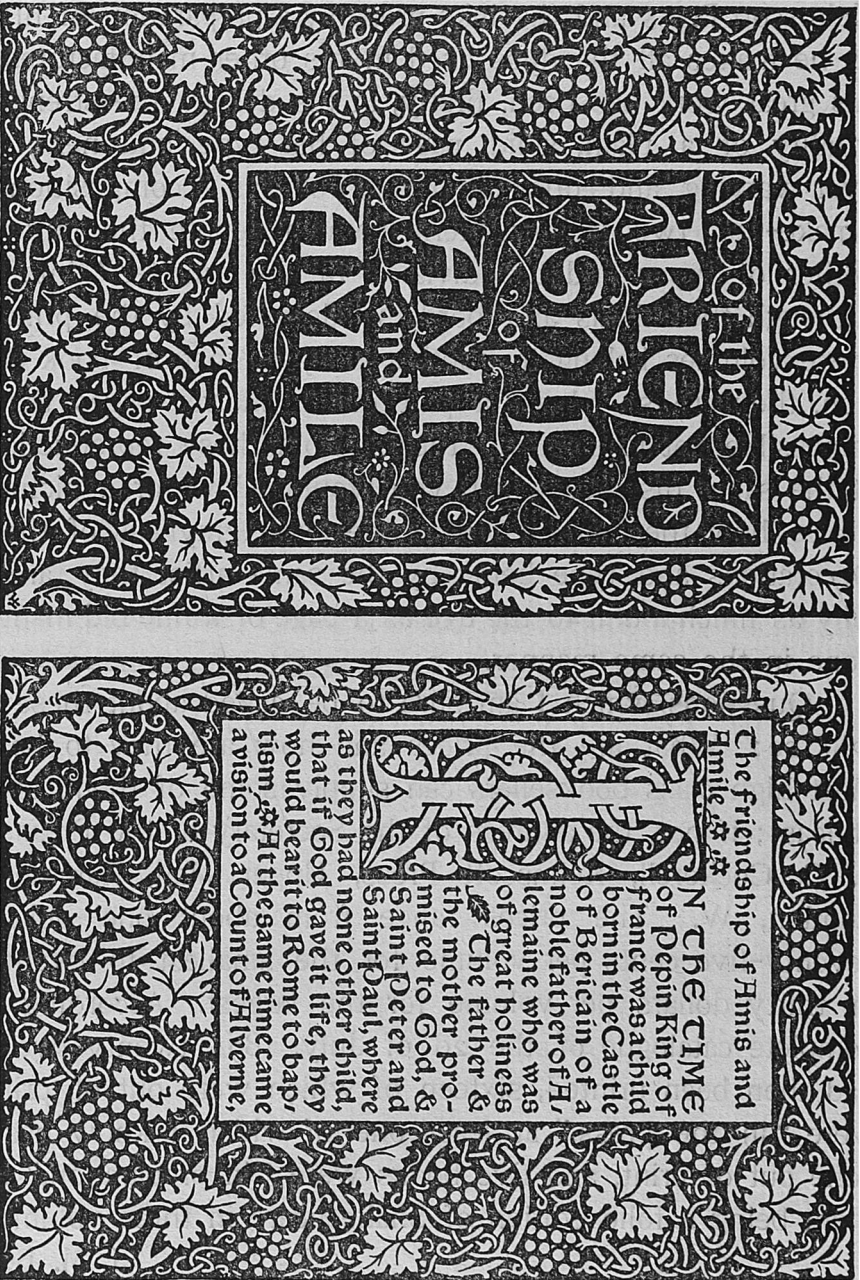
After carefully considering some criticisms that have been passed upon the volumes from the Kelmscott Press, I still can not hesitate to say that he should be considered the greatest printer of the age. His one thought has been quite simple, to make books as beautiful as those which have come down to us from the period which every bibliophile recognizes as the golden age of printing. In order to do this he has naturally returned to

WILLIAM MORRIS
AS A PRINTER

certain characteristics of form which distinguish the old books and separate them from the artistically inferior ones of the present day. This point is admitted by most book lovers who have studied the designing of types as a decorative art. But in the actual production of his books he has returned to the primitive methods used by the old printers, to the use of the hand-press exclusively, for instance; and here it is where even some of his heartiest admirers differ with him. However, as long as his books remain the most beautiful I can find in the world to-day, I can not quarrel with any of his methods.

A brief history of the origin of the press is as follows: The first impulse is said to have come from an essay on *The Production and Life of Books*, written by the English publisher and author, C. Kegan Paul, in 1883, in which he expressed the wish that some great decorative artist, "like Mr. William Morris," would undertake the designing of types for fine books, but it was April, 1891, before the first volume was issued from Kelm-scott House. It was the story of *The Glittering Plain*, by Mr. Morris himself, and printed in the Golden type, a Roman letter modeled by him so closely upon some of the fine old types of the Venetian printers of the Fifteenth Century as to be almost an adaptation of those forms for modern eyes. Since then, working within similarly strict limitations, this great designer has also given us two new forms of "black letter," the Chaucer type and the Troy type, all three of which are here illustrated by photographic reductions from pages from his books; but at the best these fac-similes give only an idea of the beauty of his pages, so instinct with life and character. In these three types have been printed quite a number of books; other romances, poems and translations by himself, and volumes of Ruskin, Shelley, Swinburne and many others, nearly all of which are now out of print, according to a recent catalogue issued from the press. Some of them command in the booksellers' shops two and three times their original cost. In them, of course, the

"* * * When the eye becomes a little accustomed to a page of Mr. Morris' type, a page of ordinary typography pales into artistic insignificance." W. Irving Way, in *The Inland Printer*



This is the Chaucer type.

*WILLIAM MORRIS
AS A PRINTER*

paper, and red and black inks employed are of the very finest, the paper being one especially manufactured for the use of the Kelmscott Press and the inks probably a preparation of his own, as he makes all the dyes used in his other manufactures. But his great work has been, firstly, in his design, the strength and vitality of a plain, solid page of his type, and next, in the ever varying and original beauty of his "composition" and "make-up," two technical terms which denote the putting together of types and the division of the "matter" into pages. Although the initials and borders "designed by the printer" in these volumes belong to another subject, that of book decoration, they are so wholly a part of Mr. Morris' pages that it is impossible not to speak of them. Hold these reproductions off at the same distance which you would allow for a picture and notice how they are drawn to the exact grayness of the page. Decorations and type being by the same artist they are naturally as much a unit to the eye as a page of a fine old manuscript done in the same manner.

Questions which I am sure to be asked about these books will be: What are the prices and how are they to be had? Most high-class booksellers can supply some of them, to order, at least; if not, the address of the Secretary of the Press is Mr. S. C. Cockerell, Kelmscott Press, Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London, W. The prices range from about one dollar and seventy-five cents per volume for the smallest to twenty-five or thirty dollars per volume for the largest. According to the complete catalogue of the 2d of July, 1894, twenty-five books had then been printed, sixteen of which were out of print, ten were "in the press," at least one of which I know has since gone out of print, and five books were "in preparation," among them being a folio edition of Shakespeare in three volumes.

J. M. BOWLES

THE RECUELL OF THE HISTORIES
OF TROYE.



HERE begynneth the volume intituled & named the Recuyell of the Hystories of Troye, composed & drawen oute of dyuerce bookes of Latyn in to frensshe by the ryght venerable persone and worshipful man, Raoul le feure, preest & chapelayn vnto the ryght noble, glorious, and myghty prynce, in his tyme, Phelip, duc of Bourgoyne, of Braband, &c., in the yere of the Incarnacion of our Lord God a thousand foure honderd sixty and foure. And translated and drawen out of frensshe in to Englysshe by Willyam Caxton, mercer, of the cyte of London, at the comaundement of the ryght hye, myghtye, and vertuouse pryncesse, hys redoubtyd lady, Margarete, by the grace of God Duchesse of Bourgoyne, of Lotryk, of Braband, &c. Whiche sayd translacion and werke was begonne in Brugis, in the Countee of flaundres, the fyrst day of Marche, the yere of the Incarnacion of our sayde Lord God a thousand foure honderd sixty & eyght, and ended and fynysshyd in the holy cyte of Colen the xix day of Septembre, the yere of our sayd Lord God a thousand foure honderd sixty and enleuen.

And on that other side of this leef foloweth the prologe.

This is the Troy type.